



AHP Student Placement Flashcard Series

Split Placements

Exploring different methods of delivering AHP (Allied Health Professional) student placements has become increasingly important. Workforce challenges including the COVID-19 pandemic, plus the plans to grow the AHP workforce, will require an ever-increasing demand for student placements.

Many teams or departments have previously struggled to manage a student full time due to working patterns, staff shortages and patient caseload. Split placements allow a student to be divided between more than one service, department or even organisation, meaning they spend time with a different educator, team or service. This is particularly useful for part-time educators, specialist teams, or those who are unable to commit to a full-time student.

Students can benefit from the split for various reasons, including a broader patient experience and a wider understanding of the healthcare system. Educators may split the time however works best for their service, with it being flexible depending on the educators, students and organisations involved. If, for example, 2 educators from different services could offer 2 days each but no more, there is also the option to incorporate a day at home in addition, where this **hybrid** approach can allow students to consolidate their learning and work on projects for the placement.

Example

Split placement between Medway Foundation Trust and Medway Community Healthcare-

A Physiotherapy student from the University of Brighton undertook a unique placement between 2 services/organisations. She spent half of her time at the beginning of each week within the Wisdom Hospice (Medway Community Healthcare), where she saw a variety of oncology and end of life patients. She then spent the other half of each week on a busy oncology ward at Medway Maritime Hospital (Medway NHS Foundation Trust), treating a multitude of complex patients from admission to discharge.

This crossover of services and collaboration enabled her to gain a better understanding of patient pathways and patient flow, from hospitals to hospices. The educators fed back that the split was positive and allowed for less time required to manage the student during a very challenging time for the hospital, but also increased communication and collaboration between the 2 services.

For some more guidance and information:

- <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/allied-health-professions/helping-ensure-essential-supply-ahps/placement-expansion-innovation>
- <https://www.csp.org.uk/professional-clinical/practice-based-learning/creating-quality-learning-environment>
- <https://www.rcot.co.uk/alternative-practice-placements>
- <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/allied-health-professions/occupational-therapy-virtual-practice-placement>

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